

REMARKS

BY

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AT THE

PRESENTATION OF THE

NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE DISTINGUISHED SERVICE MEDAL

TO AMBASSADOR MORTON I. ABRAMOWITZ

WASHINGTON, D.C.

MARCH 10, 1989

Good evening. I am simply delighted to have the chance to say a few words tonight to honor my friend and colleague, Mort Abramowitz.

During his four years as Assistant Secretary of State for Intelligence and Research, Mort has made a lasting contribution to intelligence. He has helped to strengthen the quality of our product and the integrity of our profession. With these accomplishments, he has made intelligence a more vital and valued part of our nation's foreign and national security policies.

As Director of the Bureau of Intelligence and Research, Mort has set the highest standards for intelligence analysis. And he has greatly increased the ability of his people to do their jobs -- most notably by achieving substantial improvements in the Bureau's information handling systems. His analysts have worked knowing that they have had his encouragement, his loyalty, and his confidence in their efforts. And to get their message to policymakers in a more timely and useful way, he has directed a number of changes in INR publications and briefings. The Secretary's Morning Summary, INR's flagship publication, offers an essential intelligence perspective on foreign policy issues confronting the Secretary of State and other senior officials.

Mort's leadership of INR has benefitted the entire intelligence process. I would like to specifically acknowledge Mort's role on the National Foreign Intelligence Board and especially his careful review of our National Intelligence Estimates. His intellect and critical judgment have helped ensure that our analysis is well argued, clearly presented, and carefully

documented. And as one who had to go around the table, I always trembled just a little bit when I got to Mort because I wasn't sure I'd have unanimity until he would tell me what was good and not so good about the estimate, and that was an important contribution.

Whenever the National Security Council has considered sensitive intelligence issues, his views have been sought and his voice has been respected. He has contributed a keen knowledge of policy priorities as well as an expertise developed over a wide range of foreign and domestic assignments. His many visits to Capitol Hill have helped promote a relationship of trust and accountability between the Intelligence Community and the oversight committees. I must say that during this period of receiving his confirmation he has not been as anxious to go to the Hill, but he's had the courage and willingness to do it when others did not.

Over the last two years, whenever the Secretary of State was in town, Mort, Mike, Bob Gates, and I met for lunch. Those lunches were some of the most interesting and productive times that I have spent in Washington. And Mort with his sense of humour, his perspective, and his determination not to be put aside on issues where lesser lights would yield before the Secretary's steely eyes, assured a fair hearing on a wide range of subjects of importance and interest to the Intelligence Community.

Mort, I'm very grateful to you for your straightforward, expert counsel and your appreciation of the need for intelligence to support our foreign policy. In recognition of your service to the Intelligence Community and to the United States Government, I am very pleased to present you with the

National Intelligence Distinguished Service Medal -- the highest award the Intelligence Community can bestow. You will be pleased to know that nominating you for this award was one of Secretary Shultz's last official acts and an indication of how much he, too, valued your counsel. And his nomination was strongly endorsed by your colleagues on the National Foreign Intelligence Board -- a further sign of your distinguished and valued service. It was clearly a unanimous decision.

And now, Mort, if you will join me while the citation is read.